

Valerie Marcella  
I am in Support of this bill  
Bill 975 Strengthening the Bill of Rights for Long-term Care Facility Residents  
Committee on Aging  
March 9,2021

Dear Members of the Aging Committee

My name is Valerie Marcella and I am a resident of Niantic I would like to express my support for bill 975 Strengthening the bill of rights for long-term care facility residents

Many of the current rights need to be restored, clarified and strengthened as not to be misread or misunderstood. Following these rights will help a resident feel at home, safe and protected in the facility. Having the right to associate and communicate privately is essential for residents to be able to report any medical concerns to their advocates without shame or retaliations related to negative incidents. Adding the technology rights will be beneficial in protecting the residents and provide another tool in communicating with our loved ones.

For our family I am primarily invested in two of the additions with this bill. We are more focused on the privacy to communicate with our loved one and the right to have the technology available especially cameras. I am the healthcare agent for my grandmother as she suffers from mild dementia. During this shut down she also has lost her ability to read and write because of the isolation of family. The following are situations that occurred and could have been resolved if she was allowed these two protections. Prior to covid my grandmother reported to me on several occasions that staff members had been physically aggressive or verbally abusive with her. I reported each incident to the facility. The facility investigated each incident but unfortunately no staff was ever held accountable for any of the incidents as my grandmother was only able to describe the actions or language in great detail but was not able to give a name, time, day or a proper description of the staff member. She always waited until my visits to privately report the incident as I am her confidante, her healthcare agent and only female visiting on a consistent basis. She was not comfortable reporting to the staff if cameras were in place the facility could have held the staff members accountable for their actions and prevent further events. Now with the shutdown we go much longer in between conversations, and she has dementia so any issues could go unreported because of the time lapse between communication. We communicate thru FaceTime and it is only once a week for ten minutes and it always involves staff members so there is no privacy. She has communicated about a few verbal aggression issues since the shutdown but again the facility can't verify what occurred. All other visits either outdoors or thru a window are supervised and not private these visits are also not a viable communication as she is hearing and vision impaired. These provisions are a poor substitute for in person private visits. Providing her access to privacy with her healthcare agent would help alleviate miscommunication for medical needs and support her in multiple aspects of living in a facility. I live in constant fear that she could be mis understood or mis-treated. Technology including cameras and audio could relieve that fear for many and protect our most vulnerable citizens. These issues overlap other bills so I apologize if this may be considered repetitive

We are allowed to have privacy and dignity in our medical care and emotional support. We are allowed cameras inside and outside our homes to protect us. Residents should be afforded the same rights in the facilities they call home

Please support bill 975 to protect many who are unable to protect themselves. Thank you for your consideration.